

C.A. THAYER CODFISH SCHOONER

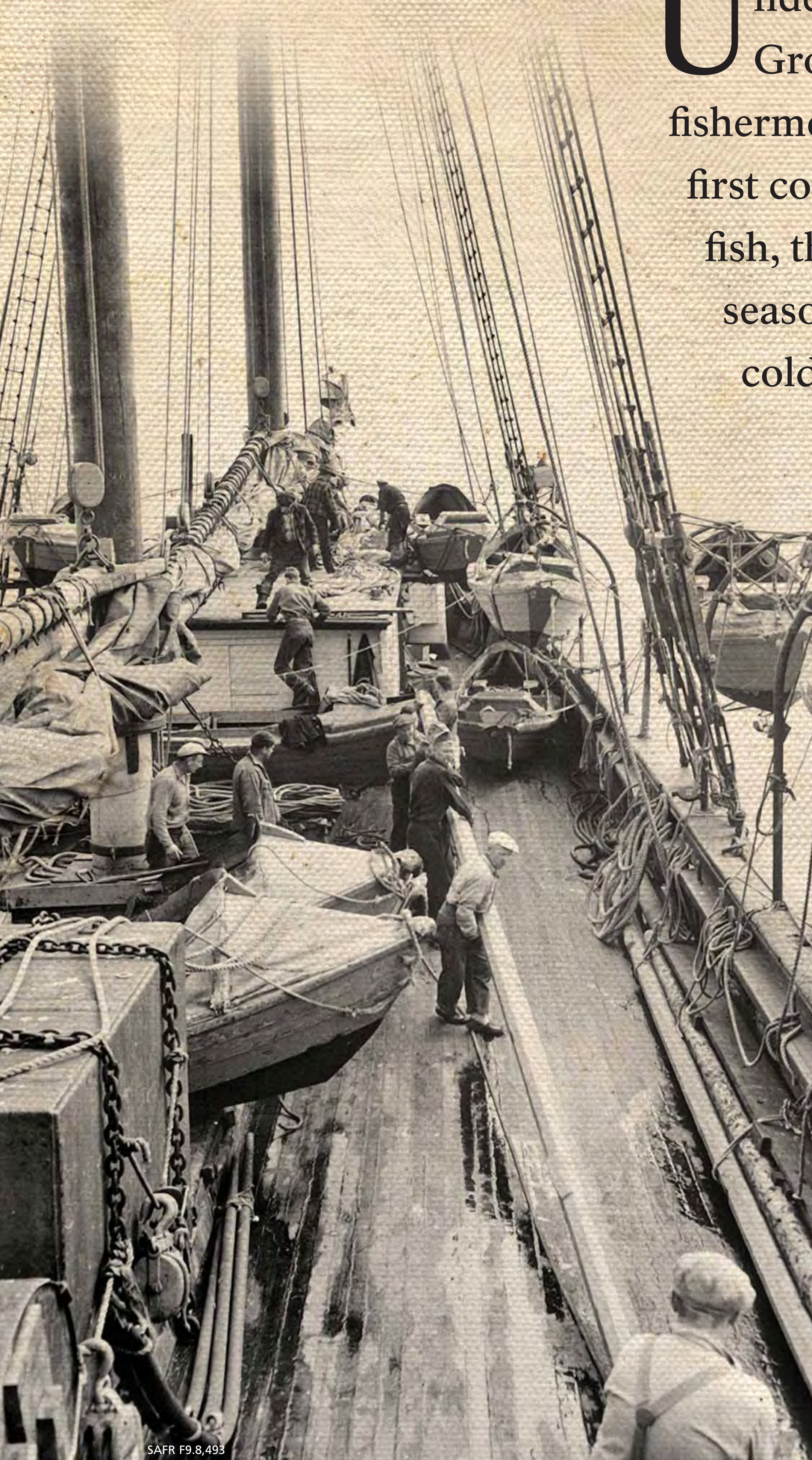
1925-1950

Under the command of John Grotle, one of the best Puget Sound fishermen, *C.A. Thayer* returned from her first cod-fishing expedition with 256,000 fish, the largest catch in the fleet's 1925 season. The Bering Sea's foul weather—cold, fog, and gales—posed a challenge for the 30-year old schooner.

Sometimes a schooner was overmatched and 20 or 30 sailors would never see their home port again.

Fishing from Dories

New owner Capt. J. E. Shields outfitted *Thayer* with accommodations for 30 fishermen and a fleet of dories on deck. A single man in each dory fished with hand lines. At midday he returned to unload the catch and eat a hot meal, then went back out for a second round of fishing. The work was hard and cold, and sometimes fishermen “went missing” in a sudden fog or unpredictable sea.



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The last haunt of the West Coast schooners was the Bristol Bay fishing grounds.

The Mother Ship

The gang on board shows off the catch. Once the dory fishermen tossed the fish on deck, the cod were beheaded, split, and cleaned before being salted in the hold.